

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. An official postal product comprising:  
a first image area having an official postal indicia;  
a second image area having a personal image and;  
a protective coating covering said second image area such that  
official cancellation mark placed over said second area will not permanently  
adhere to said personal image.
2. An official postal product according to claim 1 wherein said  
official postal product comprises a postal stamp.
3. An official postal product according to claim 1 wherein said  
protective coating is made of methylcellulose.
4. An official postal product according to claim 1 wherein said  
protective coating is made one of the following materials:  
poly(vinylformal);  
poly(vinyl benzyl);or  
poly(vinyl acetyl).
5. An official postal product according to claim 1 wherein said  
official postal product is an envelope.
6. An official postal product according to claim 1 wherein said  
official postal product is a postcard.
7. An official postal product comprising:  
a first image area having an official postal indicia;  
a second image area for receiving a separate label having a personal  
image thereon, said label being made of a material such that an official postal  
cancellation mark will not be permanently adhered thereto.

8. An official postal product according to claim 7 wherein said official postal product comprises a postal stamp.

9. An official postal product according to claim 7 wherein said protective coating is made of methylcellulose.

10. An official postal product according to claim 7 wherein said protective coating is made of one of the following materials:

poly(vinylformal);  
poly(vinyl benzyl);or  
poly(vinyl acetyl).

11. An official postal product according to claim 7 wherein said official postal product is an envelope.

12. An official postal product according to claim 7 wherein said official postal product is a postcard.

13. An official postal product comprising:  
a first image area having an official postal indicia;  
a second image area for receiving a separate label having a personal image thereon, said image having a protective coating thereon such that an official postal cancellation mark will not be permanently adhered thereto.

14. An official postal product according to claim 13 wherein said official postal product comprises a postal stamp.

15. An official postal product according to claim 13 wherein said protective coating is made of methylcellulose.

16. An official postal product according to claim 13 wherein said protective coating is made one of the following materials:

poly(vinylformal);  
poly(vinyl benzyl);or  
poly(vinyl acetyl).

17. An official postal product according to claim 13 wherein said official postal product is an envelope.

18. An official postal product according to claim 13 wherein said official postal product is a postcard.

19. An official postal product made according to claim 13 wherein said first or second image areas are made using an inkjet printer.

20. An official postal product made according to claim 13 wherein said first or second image areas are made using an a wax sublimation printer.

21. An official postal product made according to claim 13 wherein said first or second image areas are made using an electrophotographic printer.

22. A kit for producing an official postal product having personal image comprising;

a first sheet having a plurality official postal products each of said products having a first official image area having an official postal indicia and a second area for receiving a personal image;

a second sheet having a plurality of labels each having a personal image, each of said labels being adapted to placed in said second area of said official postal product, each of said labels having a protective coating thereon such

that an official postal cancellation mark will not be permanently adhered to said personal image.

23. An apparatus for applying a protective coating on a personalized image product, said a personalized image product comprising a first area having an official postage image thereon and a second area having a personal image thereon, comprising:

a scanner capable of determining the location of said second area;

and

a coating device for applying a coating only to said second area in response to said scanner determining said location of said second area.

24. An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein coating device comprises a thermal printer.

25. An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein said coating device is a wax sublimation printer.

26. An apparatus for providing a cancellation on an official postal product, said official postal product having an official image area having an official postal indicia and a second area having a personal image, comprising:

a scanner for determining the location of said first area; and

a printhead for applying a cancellation onto said first area in response to scanner locating said first area.

27. An apparatus according to claim 25 wherein said print head comprises an ink jet print head.

28. An official postal product having a first area having a first official postage image and a second area having a personal image, said personal

image being made of a substance which repels an official postal cancellation mark such that said official cancellation mark will not be adhered thereto.

29. An official postal product according to claim 28 wherein said protective coating is made of methylcellulose.

30. An official postal product according to claim 28 wherein said protective coating is made one of the following materials:

poly(vinylformal);  
poly(vinyl benzyl);or  
poly(vinyl acetyl).

31. A method for making an official postal product comprising the steps of:

providing a printing substrate;  
printing an official postal indicia in a first area on said printing substrate;  
printing a personal image in a second area on said printing substrate said second area being apart and distinct from said first area; and  
applying a protective coating on said personal image such that a cancellation mark will not be adhered thereto.

32. A method according to claim 31 wherein said protective coating is applied using a thermal printer.

33. An apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said protective coating is applied using a wax sublimation printer.

34. A method according to claim 30 wherein said protective coating is applied using an inkjet printer.



35. A method for making a postal product comprising the steps of:

- providing a printing substrate;
- printing an official postal indicia in a first area on said substrate;
- printing a personal image in a second area on said substrate, said second area being separate from said first area, using a printing substance that will not accept a cancellation ink placed over said second area.

36. A method of providing a kit for making personalized postal products, comprising the steps of:

- providing a plurality of postal products each having a first area having an official postal indicia and a second area for receiving a personal image;
- providing a plurality of personal images for placement in said second area, said personal images each having a protective coating thereon such that an official postal cancellation mark will not adhere to said personal image.

37. A method for canceling an official postal product having a first area having an official postal indicia and a second area having a personal image, said official postal indicia capable of being located on said postal product using a sensing device, comprising the steps of:

- scanning said postal product using said sensing device for obtaining information with respect to the location of said first area;
- canceling only said first area based on said information obtained from said scanning.

38. A method according to claim 37 wherein said canceling is provided using an ink jet printer.

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